

*The Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs,
Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management,
The Essex County Forum – Smart Growth for Livable Communities, and
The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
present*

Village Center Zoning

Creating Vibrant Communities

**A workshop for planners, planning board members, selectmen,
zoning boards, historic commissions, economic development staff,
and other municipal officials**



**Thursday
June 15, 2006**

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Gould Barn
One Howlett Street
Topsfield, MA**

Massachusetts towns grew up around active, historic village centers where people traditionally lived, worked, shopped, and carried out town business. In recent years, suburbanization and the separation of land uses have left many of our historic village centers in decline or under pressure to develop in ways that are not in keeping with the historic character of our towns. An important tool for helping to bring activity back to our town centers while maintaining the historic character that makes our centers unique is Village Center Zoning.

Through Village Center Zoning, a community can create a defined zoning district for the purpose of creating or preserving the characteristics of a traditional, active, mixed-use town center. Village center zoning typically allows for a mix of commercial and residential uses (often with residential above retail or offices), regulates setbacks and building design to be pedestrian friendly and fit in with the historic character of the area, restricts parking, and includes provisions for signage, lighting and landscaping to create an inviting environment.

This workshop will discuss the goals of Village Center Zoning, describe the elements of a model bylaw, and present two case studies of Essex County communities that have actively worked to adopt Village Center Zoning.

**This workshop is *free* to the public.
However, space is limited and advanced registration is required.**

To register by email or telephone, contact:

Susan Jones Moses, Smart Growth Circuit Rider
Essex County Forum
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Program

Village Center Zoning --Overview and Approaches to Rezoning - Eric Hove, Assistant Director of Sustainable Development, Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs will provide an overview of the principles of Traditional Neighborhood Development, of which Village Center Zoning is a subset. The presentation will explore how current zoning in many Massachusetts communities prohibits the very mix of uses and design characteristics that we cherish about our New England style village centers, and will discuss how to revise zoning to encourage village center development in keeping with our heritage.

Case Study: Salisbury Village Center Zoning – Planning Through Public Involvement and Land Owner and Business Outreach – Lisa Pearson, Salisbury Town Planner, will discuss the planning process Salisbury undertook to delineate the boundaries of the proposed village center zoning district, and to cultivate support for design elements and use restrictions included in the proposed bylaw. This case study provides several transferable lessons in crafting bylaws to both meet municipal planning goals and address the concerns of property owners.

Case Study: Rowley Village Center Zoning – Achieving Multiple Municipal Goals through Creative Planning– Cliff Pierce, Rowley’s Planning Board Chairman, will discuss the town’s New England Village Development bylaw, which was adopted in November 2005. The case study will explore how the adoption of the village center zoning ties into a proposed open space residential development proposed in another area of town. The case study highlights how creative thinking can help towns achieve diverse goals including open space preservation, historic preservation, affordable housing and revitalization of the village center with smart growth zoning tools.

Directions to the Topsfield Historical Society's Gould Barn

Route 97 North or South

The Topsfield Historical Society is just off the Common in the center of Topsfield. The town center is on Route 97, between Routes 1 and 95. At the Topsfield Town Library, turn onto East Common Street. That will become Howlett Street after the church. You will see a sign for the Topsfield Historical Society. The Gould Barn faces the street and sits back from the road. There is some parking on the street or at the far left end of the church lot.



Route 95/128 North or South

Take exit 50 and merge onto Route 1 north towards Topsfield. Go 3 miles. Turn left onto Route 97 north (there will be traffic lights). At the Topsfield Town Library (it'll be on your left), turn right onto East Common Street. That will become Howlett Street after the church. You will see a sign for the Topsfield Historical Society. The Gould Barn faces the street and sits back from the road. There is some parking on the street or at the far left end of the church lot.

Route 1 North or South

In Topsfield, turn onto Route 97 north at the traffic light. At the Topsfield Town Library (it'll be on your left), turn right onto East Common Street. That will become Howlett Street after the church. You will see a sign for the Topsfield Historical Society. The Gould Barn faces the street and sits back from the road. There is some parking on the street or at the far left end of the church lot.



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